794 796 jigi la, e komo fare ma e bwora dyeni ma, e bwora soma moriba, o ya di dyeni ma, oy a di numu dew ma dyenuye komo tigiw ye, makanta jigi, soma moriba, numu dew; oluw ma malo, aw kana malo, oluw ma lebu, aw kana lebu.

E komo ni nyenama biribalyuw dyugu, birilew nyima i dyugu son ta i la ka bye ta mbi ko nti nye.

E komo, i su klo la faba, nyenemaw kasange, minya kila a ko la, mi ma kila a ko la.

When the drums beat and the dances are animated, and when the masker cries, it is said that "the bara of the komo is hot" (komo bara wusule do). The ceremony is in full swing.

Diverse incidents may occur in the course of the masked dances which give rise to interpretations and interventions by the members.

794 796 787 When one of the arrows attached to the mask trembles, it indicates the presence of a sorcerer in the assembly. The elders remove the arrow and immediately order /163/ the ceremony to stop. After the drums have been silenced, they request the culprit to present himself, which he immediately does. These words are spoken to him: "Your arrow attacks you" (1). He then offers a ram and beer in sacrifice,

1. Komo bye bila.

while the arrow is replaced and the dances resume. If an arrow falls in the course of the dance it indicates the presence of a sorcerer in the village.

794 796 If a part of the costume falls off, it is picked up by three members and kept to be burned with the refuse that is later swept up (2).

2. See p. 259.

794 796 688 If one of the participants has broken the taboo and revealed the secrets of the Komo during the past year, the masker whistles, asks the drummers to stop playing, and says: "Here is a grasshopper for me." These words express the contempt in which he holds the culprit. Next he adds: "There is the smell of a corpse here" (3).

794 796 688 766

3. Su kasa be.

The man lowers his head and all move away from him. The masker wounds him with the right hook. He is banished from the circle of dancers and probably will die several days later. His funeral rites are not solemnized. The corpse is tied by the feet and removed from his home through a hole made in the wall to prevent his evil nyama from returning to the family. The body is beaten with switches so that the soul may leave the village forever, and is thrown into the common grave or placed in the cleft of a tree, which is then closed up with thorny bushes. In this case it is often devoured by the hyenas. The clothing which belonged to him is hung on the hook placed on the outside wall of the sanctuary. No one has the right to weep for his death and no one ever mentions him again. To do so would be an offense to the Komo.

794 796 688 782

It may also happen that the emergence of the Komo occurs without the village being warned. In this case, if a young girl imprudently approaches the place where the dance is being held, the masker may kill her with one blow of its hook directly upon her head. A little of her blood is then placed as an offering on the nya and her jewelry thrown into the river where her soul goes to replace the virgin who, in former times, was annually offered to Faro.

G. Effects of Broken Taboos

794 783

The breaking of the taboos attached to the altars or to the mask reacts upon each of the parts affected as it does upon the whole and brings about a diminishing of the Komo's power, which is abandoned by Faro and the ancestors. A purification may be performed /164/ in certain cases. The error is then corrected and the spiritual forces reenter the altars.

If a woman or a noninitiate catches a glimpse of the nya, the komo tigi and his age grade go down to the river bank and, to the sound of drums, present the culprit's apologies to the spirit:

"I have not come for someone else, I have come for myself, I have come to reestablish the race of our fathers" (1).

1. Ne mana ma nyini; ne mana nyere nyini,
ne ma na m fa sia tuku ko la.

794 in France. The question is too complex, however, to be treated here.

794 782 For important ceremonies, the faithful bring the nyana-tigi a contribution in proportion to their means; each of them brings grain, livestock, fowl, cowries, cloth, etc., and no one is so poor that he cannot furnish one or more jugs of beer (dlo). Everything thus collected is offered to the nyana at the general meeting of the faithful through the intermediary, the nyana-tigi. In accordance with [264] established ritual, the victims are slaughtered and libations made. Then the nyana-tigi gives thanks to the god and asks him to continue to protect his worshipers. Finally, all or part of the food is eaten at a joint banquet. This is a true communion, by means of which the god and his worshipers on the one hand, and the worshipers among themselves on the other, are closely bound together. These banquets, [786] which often last for several days, degenerate into orgies.

Internal Discipline

794 A result of the cult is that the brotherhood forms an organized body in which each member is subject to a discipline that may be summarized under these three terms: secrecy, obedience, solidarity.

Secrecy is obligatory, especially for anything having to do with the cult. Divulging the mysteries carries with it a [688] punishment which, depending on circumstances, may vary from a simple reprimand to condemnation to death, with fines, flogging, etc., as intermediate forms. People who are known to be unable to keep a secret are, on that account, excluded from the brotherhoods of nyana; this excludes women, children, certain people of caste, etc.

The obedience required of the faithful is shown by the seemingly fantastic rules enforced during the official banquets of certain brotherhoods. Members are fined for very odd infractions: sitting down, getting up, spitting, etc., before being given permission or being asked to do so. This is obviously a means of swelling the common fund, but it is also a means of making the adept realize that he is subservient to the sect.

684
695

The accusers swear: "If we are accusing falsely, may the boli kill us." The accused swear: "We are not guilty, and if we are may the boli kill us."

the boli, and may he take the life of the liar." When the council of elders has decided on the boli sien, it must be carried out. If the accused is guilty he will admit it, for to call on an idol to bear witness to a lie is to doom oneself to death, to decree one's own death. For a boli has no pity for a perjurer, and legends tell of more than one case identical to that of Ananias and Sapphira.

626
688
688

Some Negroes nevertheless perjure themselves. From then on they lose all peace; one fine day they can hold out no longer, and they go to find the master of the idol, and to him they confess their crime and their transgression. In order to save their lives they make a gnénama fani (2), and when they have paid the fani-n-kolo (3),

2. Gnénama, "living thing," "one who lives"; fani, "throat cutting"; gnénama fani, "throat cutting for one's life."

3. Fani, "throat cutting," "sacrifice"; kolo, "cowrie shells," "price"; fani-n-kolo, "price of the sacrifice."

the staff of the fetish denounces the culprit (4).

4. A Negro who perjures himself in the presence of a fetish believes himself lost. Moreover, the boli taken as witness is the one most famous for its power in that circle, for instance, the Komo of Tigini,

688

Tjo'lna, or Kégné, and the Nama of Misango, Kokodjan, or Guendo. The Djara of Tjikoumela is very popular in Bani country. A perjured Negro offers a gnénama fani, and the fani-n-kolo is costly. For the Komo it consists of two red roosters, two goats, a dog, two red kola nuts, a basket of millet (between 18 and 20 kilograms) and three times 8 kémé (the kémé is worth 80 cowrie shells) if the culprit is a man, or four times 8 kémé if it is a woman. For the Nama the price includes a gourd of honey, two gourds of karité butter, a red hen, two red kola nuts, a basket of millet, and 8 ba (the ba is worth 800 cowrie shells, or one franc), a kémé, and a débé (120 cowrie shells). In addition these are one to two kilograms of salt and a gourd of gnama-n-kou (malagueta pepper: amomum melegueta) for the sacrificer. For the Nia the cost is 12 ba, four chickens, two dogs, and two hens.

[804 436]

[804 436]

684 837 Adultery is frequent; it occurs daily and is the source of most of the disputes that arise. Some husbands are tolerant, however, and many are satisfied with 2 to 3 ba (between 1, 600 and 2, 400 cowrie shells, or 2 to 3 francs) and victims for a sacrifice to the family boli, such as a hen, a dog, a kid, or two kola nuts.

684 836 Like adultery, fornication is a serious offence because it violates the rights of third parties. It is less serious /163/ than adultery,